



# Life of Muhammad<sup>sa</sup>

BY

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MAHMUD AHMAD<sup>ra</sup>

# REGARD FOR THE POOR

The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> was ever concerned to ameliorate the condition of the poorer sections of the community and to raise their status in society.

On one occasion while he was sitting with his Companions<sup>ra</sup>, a rich man happened to pass by.

The Prophet<sup>sa</sup> inquired of one of his Companions<sup>ra</sup> what he thought of him. He replied "He is a well-to-do and well-connected man. If he were to ask for the hand of a girl in marriage the request would be favourably considered and if he were to intercede on behalf of anybody the intercession would be accepted."

# REGARD FOR THE POOR

Shortly after, another man passed by who appeared to be poor ... The Prophet<sup>sa</sup> inquired of the same Companion<sup>ra</sup> what he thought of him. He replied: "O Messenger of Allah<sup>sa</sup>! He is a poor man. If he were to request the hand of a girl in marriage the request would not be favourably received and if he were to intercede on behalf of any person the intercession would be rejected and if he were to seek to engage anybody in conversation no attention would be paid to him."

On hearing this the Prophet<sup>sa</sup> observed: "The worth of this poor man is much greater than the value of a quantity of gold sufficient to fill the whole universe"

# REGARD FOR THE POOR

A poor Muslim woman used to clean out the Holy Prophet's<sup>sa</sup> mosque in Medina.

The Prophet<sup>sa</sup> did not see her in the mosque for some days and made inquiries concerning her

He was told that she had died. He said: "Why was I not informed when she died?"

I would have wished to join her funeral prayers," and added, "perchance you did not consider her worthy of consideration as she was poor. This was not right. Direct me to her grave."

He then proceeded to her grave and prayed for her

# REGARD FOR THE POOR

While, however, the Prophet<sup>sa</sup> insisted that poor people should be respected and their feelings should not be injured ..., he also sought to instil the sentiment of self-respect into them

- ... and taught them not to beg for favours.

He used to say that it behoved a poor man not to seek to be content with a date or two or with a mouthful or two of food but to restrain himself from making a request, ..

- ...however severely he might be tried.

On the other hand he used to say that no entertainment (dinner party) would be blessed unless some poor people were also invited to it.

# REGARD FOR THE POOR

'A'isha<sup>ra</sup> relates that a poor woman came to visit her on one occasion accompanied by her two little daughters.

'A'isha<sup>ra</sup> had nothing with her at the time except one date which she gave to the woman.

The woman divided it between her little daughters and then they all departed.

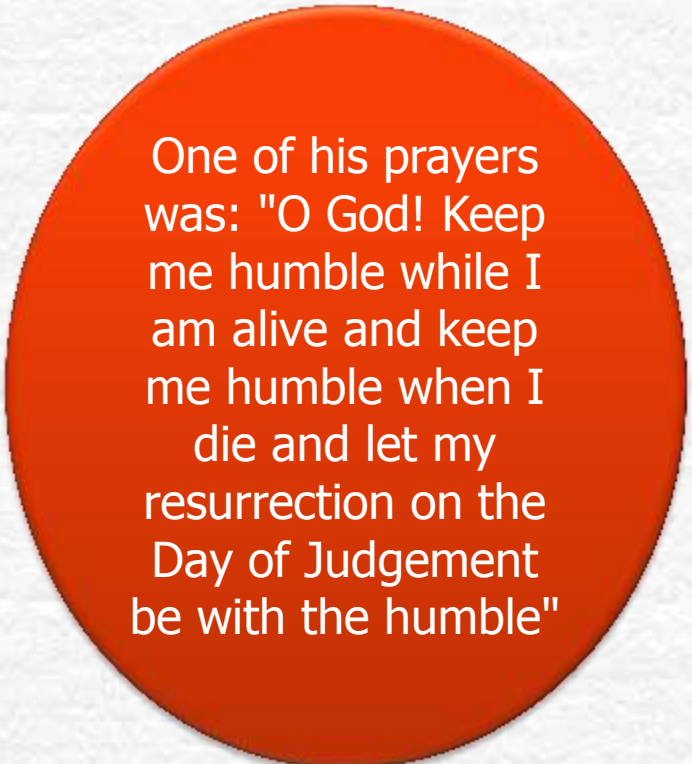
When the Prophet<sup>sa</sup> came home 'A'isha<sup>ra</sup> related this to him and he said: "If a poor man has daughters and he treats them with consideration, God will save him from the torments of Hell,"

.. and added: "God will bestow Paradise upon this woman on account of the consideration she showed towards her daughters"

# REGARD FOR THE POOR

On one occasion he was told that one of his Companions, Sa`d<sup>ra</sup>, who was a well-to-do person, was boasting of his enterprise to others.

When the Prophet<sup>sa</sup> heard this, he said: "Let no man imagine that his wealth or standing or power is the result merely of his own efforts or enterprise. That is not so. Your power and your position and your wealth are all earned through the poor."



One of his prayers was: "O God! Keep me humble while I am alive and keep me humble when I die and let my resurrection on the Day of Judgement be with the humble"

# REGARD FOR THE POOR

On one occasion during the hot weather when he was passing through a street, he observed a very poor Muslim carrying heavy load.

He was very plain of features which were rendered still more unattractive by a heavy coating of perspiration and dust.

The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> approached him stealthily from the back and, as children sometimes do in fun, he put forward his hands and covered the labourer's eyes with them, expecting him to guess who he was.

The man put back his own hands and feeling over the body of the Prophet<sup>sa</sup> realized that it was the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> himself.

He probably guessed also that nobody else would show such intimate affection for a man in his condition.

Being pleased and encouraged, he pressed against the Holy Prophet's<sup>sa</sup> body ... rubbing his dust and sweat-covered body against the clothes of the Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, ... .



# REGARD FOR THE POOR

The Prophet<sup>sa</sup> went on smiling and did not ask him to desist.

When the man had been put in a thoroughly happy mood the Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said to him: "I possess a slave; do you think anybody will be willing to buy him?"

The man realized that probably there was nobody in the whole world, save the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> himself who would be ready to see any worth in him,

and ..he replied: "O Messenger of Allah<sup>sa</sup>! there is nobody in this world who would be prepared to purchase me."

The Prophet<sup>sa</sup> said: "No! No! You must not say that. You are of great worth in the eyes of God".

# REGARD FOR THE POOR

Not only was he himself watchful of the welfare of the poor but he constantly exhorted others to be the same.

Abu Musa Ash`ari<sup>ra</sup> relates that if a needy person approached the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> and made a request, he would say to those around him, "You should also support his request so that you may acquire merit by becoming sharers in promoting a good deed",

.. his object being to create on the one side in the minds of his Companions a feeling of eagerness to help the poor and on the other in the minds of the needy a realization of the affection and sympathy felt for them by their better-off brethren.